

NOMINATE A NEIGHBOR!

We asked you to recognize people in our community who are making a difference and it's clear that there is no shortage of people to recognize here! Thank you for participating and a VERY BIG THANK YOU to all of our friends and neighbors who go the extra mile for our community. Happy Holidays from the Better Middlebury Partnership!

Jesse Brooks, nominated by Celia

Jesse is one of the most kind and caring people that I know. She works hard every day to improve the health, education and financial stability of the people in our Addison County community. She is always brainstorming new ideas of how to lift up others (especially her co-workers), and she always succeeds in that!

Sharon and Rock D'Avignon, nominated by Isabel Gogarty

Sharon and Rock are a wonderful couple that live on the first floor of my apartment building. I moved into the building in the spring and was welcomed by Sharon vacuuming the main hallways and up keeping the shared spaces. Rock has helped me and my roommate out on numerous occasions with technology and cable issues. He brings great knowledge from his Addison County Chamber of Commerce local business, Business Telephone Systems. They let me play with their dogs as my childhood dogs are at my parents' house. They crack the best jokes and are always willing to give me life advice as a young professional new to Middlebury.

Lloyd Komesar, nominated by Jennifer Stefani

Lloyd has brought fun, glamour, and vitality to Middlebury at the end of summer through the Middlebury Film Festival. Attending the festival is like traveling to a thousand locations in one week. Lloyd seems to be everywhere, and knows everyone, and doesn't discriminate who is important and who isn't--he is a networker, connector, and creator. should be recognized not only for great event planning, but for the inclusivity with which he reaches out to the town, college, and brings in visitors as well. Our town wouldn't be the same without him!

Bethanie Farrell, nominated by Jennifer Stefani

Bethanie is creative, connected, and compassionate! She has created the most amazing and beautiful storefront, which is a gift that keeps on giving. All the local businesses seem to have her plants in them, now, and they are more beautiful because of that. She has created a method of sharing food and money with local businesses and with hungry or tired or both townspeople, so that we can help more neighbors with our money. I buy all my gifts at her shop, and feel so good knowing that the money for the plants goes to support restaurants and the healthy food goes to support those who are not up to cooking. Bethanie has created an atmosphere of kindness, respect, mutual support, and beauty all in one place and we are richer for having her here.

Fred Kenney, nominated by Jennifer Stefani

Fred has tirelessly worked to support local businesses of Addison County with access and information and grants and loans. He shows up to all the fun days put on by the BMP, and goes above and beyond to support the work of workforce development. He keeps his eye on things from a high political/legislative level, but is willing to get his hands right into the day-to-day work, including serving popcorn, hot dogs, and staffing booths at Fair and Field Days.

Bethanie Farrell, nominated by Ginny Ashenfelder

She has been amazingly willing and capable in meeting the needs of underserved Addison County residents, providing delicious and nutritious meals specific to individuals' health needs when other resources are not able to do so!! Her remarkable creativity and resourcefulness in rallying various elements of our Middlebury restaurants, stores and individuals to help needful individuals has made a huge difference in the lives of many residents!! My deepest appreciation and admiration are endless for the viable system she has developed!

Heidi Lacey, nominated by Jennifer Stefani

Heidi is working relentlessly (though she is tired!) on behalf of our neighbors without houses. She has a fierce honesty, kindness, and willingness to keep on showing up. She is smart, passionate, and respectful of the people she works with and for. She is managing to serve people at their most vulnerable time without a lot of recognition, money, or time off, and she is a unique person filling a terribly important role at a time when it is desperately needed.

Joan Stephens, nominated by Tricia Chatary

She selflessly, no-questions-asked, always comes to the aid of friends and strangers alike. She's sheltered and/or sponsored several refugee families since before I knew her [2007] from Lebanon to Afghanistan to Ethiopia to India to Mexico. She will drive whomever, wherever at the drop of a hat from local doctor's appointment to JFK or Montreal airports. Currently she is helping migrant workers by volunteering to teach English and supporting Victoria in her agency. She looks out for the local kids too by providing a safe place space so parents can take a break.

Joan Stephens, nominated by anonymous

Joan is one generous person! Modest too, preferring to give without fanfare to the scores of people -- mostly refugees or migrants in addition to us local friends -- no matter the ask. Need a ride to the airport? No problem: BTV, JFK, ALB or even Toronto CA! She provides a safe play space for the neighborhood children, including those whose parents run local restaurants. Currently she's teaching English to migrant workers. Doctor's appointment? Shopping? Water your plants? Feed your cat? No problem! Never a hesitation.

Linda Horn, nominated by Nancy Malcolm

She is willing to do just about anything to help people/organizations out. The list is too long and she keeps expanding it. And she NEVER asks for recognition.

Jim Gish, nominated by Victoria DeWind

Tireless work supporting the community through the railroad reconstruction.



Joan Stephens, nominated by Bernadine Dawes

Joan Stephens is the most generous person I know. She devotes her life to caring for other people of all ages and social classes. She goes out of her way to help anyone in need, from finding clothing for migrant workers, teaching English to non-native speakers, taking care of children, assisting folks with chores, medical appointments, and on and on. She gives so much of herself to our community and with great humor and love in her heart. She deserves to be recognized for her many gifts and contributions.

Nancy Malcolm, nominated by anonymous

She is always stepping up to make Middlebury better, especially during the train tunnel construction. Her big yellow chair is a symbol of her cheerful participation in improving Middlebury.

Ilsey Public Library- children's room staff, nominated by Julie Berg

As a teacher, parent and community member, I truly appreciate the effort that the children's library staff (not just one person) puts into making the story walk on Harrow Drive. They choose wonderful stories and change them often. Children all over town enjoy them and it makes our neighborhood special. Thank you for the efforts to share books outdoors! Well done!

Dorothy Douglas, nominated by Amanda Reinhardt

Every morning I see Dorothy leave her driveway and head out for a walk. She ALWAYS has a plastic bag in hand. She ALWAYS returns with garbage. When she's not doing green up day every day, you might find her at the congregational church or across the street at the shelter. Throughout the pandemic she's picked up groceries for our elderly neighbors and she always stops to say hi to my 2 year old. When he watches her mow the lawn, waving the whole time, she always smiles. Dorothy is hard working and would NEVER want to be nominated or recognized for what she does for our town, because she simply does her thing, doing what she does helping others but she inspired me to be a good neighbor and to build relationships with those around me.

Megan James, nominated by anonymous

Megan runs the mini bury portion of the Addison Independent. She is always giving the latest hot tops for fun things to do with kids. She's gotten me and my family out around town more in the past year and a half than we have been before. She shines light on the big and small events. Surprisingly, I think Middlebury can be difficult to manage as a family, and having her voice on minibury helps me feel connected to the town. I know she's involved in the hopes to have a VT Children's Museum in Middlebury. Last year during the pandemic she and her family famously pit on a TMcocoa-port[in their yard. There were socially distanced stations, and you walked in around the yard until you had all the fixings for a delicious cup of hot cocoa, including a marshmallow that came down from the second floor. Oh she also had a real donkey there. Megan reminds me often, through her actions, that we MAKE our community, and she makes ours great.

Carolyn Turnbull, nominated by Rebecca West

Carolyn is a very kind person who will help a neighbor out. She is always easy to talk and truly a rare gem.

Shari Lussier, nominated by Lianne Lussier

Shari is one of the kindest people I know. She has lived in Middlebury most of her life and contributed to the town in countless ways. She is always offering to help others whether by cleaning their homes, lending a hand, baking/cooking meals, or giving away the many eggs from her chickens! She is well-known in the community for being a social butterfly and always asking how others are doing.

Sally & Dick Thodal, nominated by Chris Olson

Dick and Sally are neighbors, friends, and caring citizen partners who actively put themselves into the communities that they choose and those that chose them. Both are independent thinkers who are willing and able to listen, to understand, and respond to a variety of human conditions that require thoughtful action delivered with compassion. Active, humorous, responsive - they warm the hearts and stimulate the minds of Middlebury's residents daily, and have demonstrated repeatedly how to be a good neighbor.

Bill (Buzz) Kernan, nominated by Betsy McAshley

Buzz epitomizes Rotary's phrase "service above self." He is Rotary Club of Middlebury's current president and is a strong, conscientious leader both in Rotary and in what he does for the town. I am grateful for him and his support to this community!

Jane Steele, nominated by Walter Stugis

Jane has volunteered 40-hours+ a week at the Charter House homeless shelter for years, including an extraordinary Covid emergency response driving the meals program 365/24/7. If she wins a prize I hope it is a week off to rest.

Joan Stephens, nominated by anonymous

She spends her time helping others. If she sees a need, she fills it. A truly wonderful person.

Henry Haskell, nominated by Laura Fetterolf

Henry is the caretaker of the Sarah Partridge Community House and Library in East Middlebury. He's always on call for anything that might come up, and is dedicated to making sure things are done right. He makes sure the walks are shoveled and sanded as soon as the snow stops. He comes in and checks on our aging boiler. He makes sure the heat comes on, the plants are watered, and the community house is tidy. If there's something that needs painting, fixing, or repairing, or carpentry, Henry takes care of it. He always takes great pride in displaying the East Middlebury Veterans flag every Memorial Day and Veteran's Day - it's an enormous flag, and requires quite a production to get it flying! He meets up with a neighbor who has limited vision to read books to her. He is kind, generous, unassuming and an absolute treasure. We are so lucky to have him here at the Sarah Partridge!

Joan Stephens, nominated by Debra Davison

Joan gives of herself. Took a class to teach English to those who are new to this country. Helps people in need, young and old, homeless, physical needs. An asset to the community.

Karen LaFlamme, nominated by anonymous

Karen has raised 6 kids on her own, all while working full time in

Middlebury. She has volunteered for a Very Merry Middlebury for years, has volunteered with Dinners with Love, and recognizes every single face around Middlebury. She brightens days and strives to make Middlebury a better place. She has been working for Middlebury College since 2008 and I can say for certain that Middlebury would not be what it is today without her. She waitresses at Rosie's on weekends since 2008 and has become like family to so many different families around Addison County. She is the very definition of a good neighbor and better friend. I am proud to know and love her. If you ask anyone around town, they will surely recognize her name and some way she has bettered their life or place of business. Middlebury has thrived because of her dedication and drive.

Sadie Danforth, nominated by anonymous

Sadie has been inspirational to music students of all ages and professional musicians alike, keeping our community filled with music through an incredibly difficult time of the global pandemic. Through finding safe ways to keep the music alive, she has lifted the spirits of the community through music and camaraderie and showed that Addison County is a place of unique friendship, caring, talent, and culture. Her spirit is a gift to us all! Thank you, Sadie!

Steve Williams, nominated by anonymous

Steve is an active member of the Middlebury Rotary Club. He gives generously of his time and talent and does so with a tremendous amount of humility.

Randy, nominated by anonymous

Randy, from Randy's Service Center, has only ever shown patience and kindness in all the interactions I have ever had with him. He runs an awesome and essential business that many depend on in a way that is generous and considerate to all who walk through the door.

Jenn Quinn, nominated by Kate Livesay

Jenn is ultra involved in the community. From coaching rec basketball, mums soccer, youth lacrosse, to Mary hogan read-a-thon, president of MESA, president of Mary Johnson Childrens Center board she really does it all. So much of her mindset is embedded in service. She is a connector, a doer and someone you can rely on in times of need. She is always ready to step up for anyone or anything. On top of all of her service Jenn is devoted employee of the Home Health and Hospice group (a group that has been critical in supporting Covid testing and vaccine efforts in our community). And lastly she is an amazing parent of 3 wonderful children.

Karen (&Rick) Morris, nominated by Angela Cobrin Landis

Karen and Rick run the MUMS cross country, winter running and track program. But this isn't speaking to their coaching as much as to their complete commitment & dedication to our community. All students, regardless of ability, are not only welcome but encouraged. Karen built the program up from 8 runners (9 years ago) to over 50+ at this point. Karen and Rick both work full time in Burlington, run marathons on weekends, organize a local running club for adults and then come run (at a MUCH slower pace) to mentor our local youth. Karen even bakes cakes, cookies, muffins for the students after every single practice. Karen and Rick are single-handedly building confidence, acceptance

and healthy habits for middle schoolers. I have never met anyone who doesn't speak of them in the most fond and positive ways. They embody community in every sense of the word.

Andy Rossmeissl, nominated by David Dolginow

Andy goes above and beyond to help improve Addison County. Whether it's thinking about kid friendly driving zones, or how to improve our telecom infrastructure, or helping to build our county's entrepreneurial spirit, he provides our community with invaluable leadership.

Amanda Reinhardt, nominated by Tammy Grant

Amanda works at Middlebury College and during Covid she would work all day, go home put her infant son to bed and come back to campus to work events so that the students would have activities to do on campus. This was during the timeframe when students were required to remain on campus to keep both themselves and the town safe from the spread of COVID. She's is very dedicated to student engagement and promoting local business, as she planned many activities for the students while supporting and using local goods and services last semester, because she knew the need to keep local businesses thriving during the pandemic.

Karen and Rick Morris, nominated by anonymous

Karen and Rick have been the cross country (fall) and track and field (spring) coaches at MUMS for many years. They give so much time and energy to introducing middle school kids to the joys of running and exercise. Their secret: baked goods after every practice!

Mary Dragon, nominated by Heather Smith

Mary is the most generous person, I know. She gives without any desire for something in return. She devotes her energy to the good that she wants to do. She works full time at Middlebury College, and then is often seen running around helping someone by doing errands, making food, or transporting them. Although the world is not a perfect place, Mary does not stop giving her time, energy or money. She sees the world in a different light than others. And because of her, I truly believe the world is a much better place.

Marianne Doe, nominated by Courtney Krahn

Marianne is our actual neighbor, and I always tell her that we won the neighbor lottery. A retired high school English teacher, Marianne stays even more busy than ever before. She volunteers and teaches writing classes at the Parent Child center. She quietly and without fanfare takes care of people who are sick, sad or otherwise in need. She drops appropriately-themed cookies off at our house for our kids every holiday – bunnies, pumpkins, turkeys, hearts, Christmas trees, etc. When we need an onion or a cup of milk, she says things like, "I'm not home, but just go right in and get it." Marianne shuttles her grandkids around and often has them over night, along with her grand doggies. I could go on, but she's a great example of a quiet angel among us!

Kayla Griswold, nominated by anonymous

Kayla is a good friend of mine. She works very hard and never has time to herself. She has a big heart and always makes room in her

heart to spread love and kindness.

Allie Griffiths, nominated by Leah Duguay

She builds great connections with the kids in her classroom and is really nice and funny. She's supportive to everyone and really well loved as a MUMS teacher. She's literally everyone's favorite teacher.

Maria Graham, nominated by Cheryl Bristol

Maria's smile, knowledge and hard work makes this wonderful little store a great place for moms and dads to be able to find lightly used clothes for their fast growing children at a very discounted price. Maria has put a lot of time and effort in this lovely little place and without her it may not be here in our small little Middlebury town. I vote Maria!!

Allie Griffiths, nominated by Eli Anderson Bunt

She is the best choir/general music teacher and she is so nice and fun, if you are having a bad day you won't be after being in her choir or music class. whatever you want to talk about in her class is ok and discussions can actually happen no topic is off limits.

Allie Griffiths, nominated by anonymous

Miss Griffiths is our middle school choir/music teacher- she is awesome! All our friends agree that in her class, we feel very safe and she is so welcoming to everyone. MUMS is going through a very hard time right now, and none of the teachers really talk to the students about it. Except for in choir, Miss Griffiths realized that everyone was feeling put off and distracted, so she said that we should talk about it. It was really helpful to everyone to discuss what was going on, because in all the other classes, the teachers were trying to pretend everything was normal. In most classes, we don't feel as safe or respected and don't have as much fun, but we always look forward to going to choir.

Martha Sullivan DeGraaf, nominated by anonymous

Martha is the heart of Vergennes. She is involved in every committee, volunteers in the schools and church, and organizes many community-wide events throughout the year.

Kim Callahan, nominated by Ashley Bessette

Kim gives and gives to New Haven! She is so active behind the scenes of making New Haven a wonderful place to live and raise children. She volunteers to support MAUSD in connecting to the community. She volunteers at Beeman as a mentor. She diplomatically keeps people informed and helps create time for New Haven folk to get together and brainstorm the vision for the town. She is thoughtful, compassionate and ethical in her approach and so generous with her time and energy.

Dave Holbrook, nominated by Danielle LaBerge

Dave is always a phone call/text away to help out any way he can. He has helped my mom and I tremendously around our house after my dad was no longer able. He's always happy to help someone with anything and expects nothing in return. He changed a tire for a complete stranger on his way to FL, using his own tools that were packed away in his RV. Dave's a great guy who has earned extra thanks this year! Thank you Dave for all your help!

Ashley Pelkey, nominated by anonymous

Her best friend is battling cancer & she's been working hard having bake sales & raising money. Someone please show her some recognition. Thanks!

Matt Lewis, nominated by Quarry Hill School

Matt has offered his talents and time to make Quarry Hill School a safer and more expansive outdoor learning environment for our preschoolers. Thank you Matt!

Lindsey Fuentes George, nominated by Justice Elijah

Lindsey has dedicated her life to helping others. Before her role at the Teen Center, she ran an establishment that helped those with a wide range of challenges. Present day, she's showed up day and night to make sure the children in Addison County as loved, fed and supported. She encourages her staff to be their authentic selves and supports our vision to help students be their authentic self.

Shauna Lee, nominated by April Barry

She is an amazing Teacher, and school emotional support to all kiddos. She even is there to listen to us parents and find the best way to help our children. She is a very caring and loving lady. We love you Mrs. Lee! Thank you for all you do.

Toby and Renita Welch, nominated by Kelly Murphy

Renita and Toby are long time residents of East Middlebury. They are always willing to help neighbors out whether it's with digging a bolder out of your yard, offering advice on gardening or chickens, or helping to fix your lawn mower that's not running. They are the kindest neighbors anyone could ask for.

Peggy Rush, nominated by Pamela Spatafora

Peggy, who is 80 years old. is constantly checking in with her friends and neighbors. She keeps in touch with everyone to see how they are doing, especially if they are ill or home bound and always asks if there is anything she can do for them. She sits with and visits elderly friends, volunteers many, many hours at her church, runs errands for people. She even cut my husbands hair when I couldn't get him to a barber. She picks up trash she may find in her neighborhood. She helps her friends out with their garage sales. She will frequently pick up some treat that she knows her friends might like and drops them off. She is always upbeat and smiling and will take nothing in return. This woman deserves every award there is for her caring and compassion.

Kathy Reynolds, nominated by Susanna Mason

Kathy has gone from a one day per week volunteer at JuneBug to a practically full time employee (working for free!). The busier JuneBug gets the more she goes out of her way to plan her weeks around the store to ensure she can be there as much as possible to help out. On days she's not working she often finds a way to stop by the store to drop off a treat for her colleagues. She's a treasure that we couldn't survive without at JuneBug!!!

Kelly Hickey, nominated by Bethanie Farrell

Kelly is an amazing champion of our Middlebury community! She continually goes out of her way to help promote local businesses,

volunteers her time and expertise to help others, and leads by example in fostering creativity, commerce and connection. And she does it all with kindness, grace and enthusiasm!

Dottie Neuberger, nominated by anonymous

Dottie spearheads the weekly Community Supper which has been on a take out basis for families and individuals during the pandemic, serving approximately 300 meals each week.

Bethanie Farrel, nominated by anonymous

Bethanie provides bags brimming with healthy, delicious food to Addison County Residents in need every week. I am one of the lucky recipients she helps. She helps up to several hundred people each week, plus she often has to do some of the deliveries herself. She works tirelessly and cares so much, and is always friendly and welcoming. I've seen the overwhelming gratitude of the individuals and families who receive the meals when I have helped with deliveries, and I feel the same way. Bethany is making an enormous impact. She deserves recognition!

Leslie Kameny, nominated by Judy Wiger-Grohs

Leslie Kameny is the main reason Middlebury's Tree Committee exists. She is the driving force behind the committee's mission and its work. Her knowledge of and desire to promote "green infrastructure" is impressive. She is great at collaborating with people and figuring out how to get trees in the ground! With Leslie's guidance and leadership Middlebury has become a Tree City USA for three years running. With Leslie's guidance and leadership we have planted 38 trees in Middlebury this year alone. We have developed the Town's tree policy. We hold yearly Arbor Day celebrations. And, with Leslie's guidance and superior writing skills, we have brought in over \$16,000 in grant money to further preserve and protect Middlebury's urban tree canopy. Leslie is truly deserving of BMP's "Nominate a Neighbor" award.

Carol Stephenson, nominated by anonymous

Carol is the kindest and most thoughtful neighbor I've ever had. She goes out of her way on a daily basis to help our neighbors, whether it be by making dinners for a single mother and her 2 kids, running errands for someone who can't get out, or volunteering to help in any other way she can. She is thoughtful, sweet, loving, and selfless; and having her as our neighbor has meant more for my kids and I than I can say. She is true angel!! I don't know what our neighborhood would do without her.

Kathy Reynolds, nominated by anonymous

She volunteers a staggering amount of time every week in her retirement. Junebug wouldn't have made it through the fall without her!

Fred Kenney, nominated by anonymous

He gives support to small businesses and entrepreneurs, connects people, always puts Middlebury and Addison county first. Awesome guy loved by everyone and knows everyone.

Jane Steele, nominated by Mary Gill

She is the unofficial house mother at the Charter House Warming Shelter. She (voluntarily) works tirelessly securing food, clothing,

bedding, furniture, and the endless amounts the essentials needed to operate a safe and welcoming home for folks in need of shelter. Jane opens her heart to everyone who enters the door and serves as a surrogate mother to all. Jane finds jobs, drives folks to appointments, helps secure bank accounts, and assists them when needing counseling or legal guidance. She treats all as family and provides love, nurturance and guidance to those who do not have a secure support network.

We randomly did a drawing of all of the names submitted to us and chose five people who each will receive a \$100 gift card to the local business of their choice as a gift from the Better Middlebury Partnership.

Thanks to all for being a light in our community and congratulations to:

Joan Stephens

Carol Stephenson

Karen and Rick Morris

Sharon and Rock D'Avignon

Shari Lussier